

# MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

*Bulletin of the Maryland Ornithological Society*

*2101 Bolton Street, Baltimore 17, Maryland*



Volume 12

MARCH 1956

Number 1

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2101 Bolton Street, Baltimore 17, Md.

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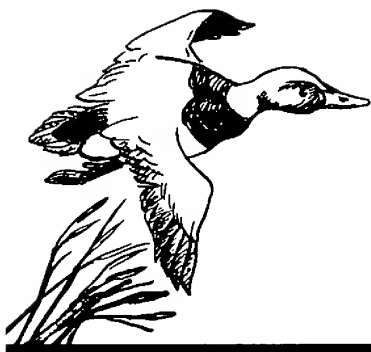
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MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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## MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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### A TRIP TO SHARP'S ISLAND

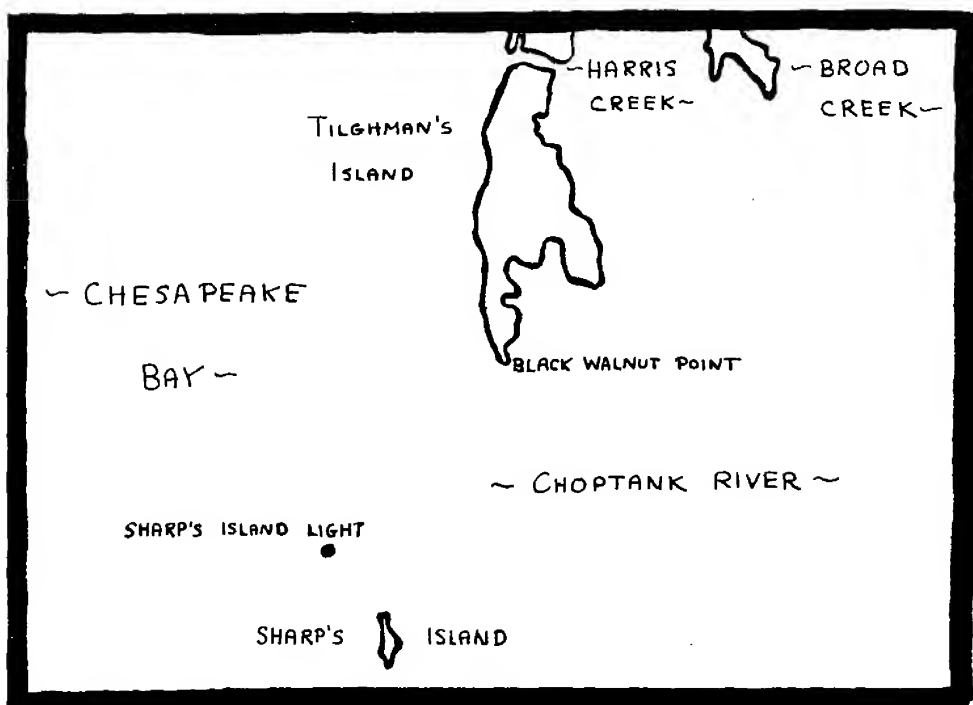
Richard L. Kleen

According to written accounts, Sharp's Island was at one time an island of considerable size, many acres in extent, and containing a number of rich and profitable farms. Later, within the memory of many local residents, a large resort hotel was built on this island in the Choptank River. Today, the hotel has disappeared and the farms have sunk beneath the waves. The inexorable force of the tide has persistently nibbled away at the land and all that was upon it until today all that remains of Sharp's Island in a mudbank less than an acre in extent. The only vegetation is a variety of marsh grass that covers almost two-thirds of the remaining land.

For longer than the memory of the oldest residents of Talbot County, Laughing Gulls and Least and Common Terns have nested on Sharp's Island. Long ago they were observed laying their eggs in the more secluded sections of the island. As the land washed away and became less in size, the birds took over a greater and greater part of it until today during the breeding season the island is covered with nesting birds.

During the height of this somewhat belated nesting season, two young birders, Russel Dize and Jimmy Cummings, both of Tilghman's Island, and I visited Sharp's Island in hopes of banding some of the terns that had not yet taken flight. We set out from Bar Neck on the morning of July 24 in a motor launch. Captain Russel handled the boat like a veteran, while first mate Jimmy seemed to anticipate his every command. My chief duty appeared to be keeping out of the way. We finally sighted what was left of Sharp's Island, moved in to about one hundred yards, anchored, and landed with a skiff.

As we approached, a cloud of almost a hundred Laughing Gulls (Larus atricilla) wheeled up from the island and flew off toward the mainland.



The majority were birds that had hatched during the year and were still in their brownish immature plumage. We appeared to be a week or two late to band any Laughing Gulls this year.

What we missed in gulls, we more than made up for in terns. Both the Least Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) and its larger relative, the Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) were flying in great numbers over the island. Their action of hovering over certain areas bespoke the fact that there were either young or eggs about.

As we landed, fledgling terns skittered away from us and we had to watch our step to avoid stepping on the eggs. In the areas covered by sand and by broken shells, we noted the Least Tern was dominant. Her eggs were the color of dry sand and were covered with brownish markings. It took sharp eyes to see them as they lay camouflaged among the sand and shells. The young birds too were sand-colored and difficult to see. We captured as many of the young Least Terns as we could and banded 24, those which we thought large enough to support the rings. We then moved on to the Common Terns which nested in the marsh grass. Their eggs were darker as would camouflage them in their darker environment. We found only eight young Common Terns to band, but there were easily twice that number of nests with eggs.

On a little point at one end of the island, we had noted a single Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*). Many of this species of gull remain with us during the summer, but never had they been known to breed in Maryland. Those that remain with us are usually the immature birds.

This bird, however, was in the beautiful gray and white mature plumage. As we walked toward the bird, it took to the air, circled a few times, and landed upon the water. Near where it had been sitting, we discovered a nest with an egg larger than those of either of the two terns we had encountered. It was dark with brown and purple markings, and was nestled in a tussock of marsh grass. Further searching revealed another nest with a single egg, then a third nest, this time with two eggs. Were these the nests of the Laughing Gull which has established several breeding areas in Maryland, or was it the nest of the Herring Gull? Our only method of absolute proof was to take egg measurements. They turned out to be 2.8 by 2.0 inches. This was exactly the size of the Herring Gull egg, and half again as large as the similar egg of the Laughing Gull. We had established the first nesting record for the Herring Gull in the State of Maryland!

After spending a few hours on the island and adding the Black Duck to our list of Sharp's Island nesters, storm clouds began to hover near us and we set out once again for Tilghman's Island, the nearest point of which lay three miles to the north. As we left, the terns began to quiet down and took up once again the routine that we had interrupted. The single Herring Gull circled her nesting site and landed a few feet from the tussock of grass where we had found her egg. She watched us with a steady gaze until we were out of sight.

St. Michaels

#### RACCOONS ATTACK NESTING MARTINS

A. J. Fletcher

It is well known that the raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) is a predator on birds' nests. This is a natural method of supplying the protein needs of its diet. When several raccoons attack a colony of Purple Martins (*Progne subis*), the results are more disastrous than the casual nest destruction by a passing raccoon.

Robert Maloney, owner of a large colony of Purple Martins on Wiliston Lake in Caroline County had reported in 1952 that raccoons were damaging his colony. He enlisted the aid of the local game warden, and raccoons were trapped near the boxes. At that time, raccoons were eating young birds.

During the two-week period from June 11 to 25, 1955, the writer and his family were visiting the Middle West, adding new birds to their lists, while their own martin colony was being raided by raccoons. On the return, it was noted that no martins were seen near three of the four boxes. As all boxes were thought to be protected against predators, this was a surprise.

Investigation revealed two indications that raccoons were guilty. Tracks were found on all poles, and droppings about the size a raccoon

would produce were found which contained almost nothing but egg shells. The season had been wet, and fresh raccoon tracks were a positive sign of their presence. These tracks were found to ascend a half-inch pipe in one case, a four inch steel pipe in another, over a two-foot metal shield in the third, and up as far as an eight-inch flange in another case. The egg shells were of the color, texture and curvature of martin eggs. It is concluded that a flange-type metal protector is of greatest value, even though much narrower.

Although the colony had been practically eliminated, later tracks proved that the raccoons continued to visit the area for another two weeks. Only one small box of sixteen rooms survived. As this attack occurred early in the season, only eggs were destroyed. Even so, adult birds refuse to return to such a colony, and the whole colony suffers. The Williston colony was three years building back to near-normal numbers. It will be interesting to observe the future populations in the colony attacked in 1955.

Route 1, Garland Lake, Denton

#### SUPPLYING NEST MATERIAL SIMPLIFIES NEST FINDING

Roberta B. Fletcher

Nest finding can become just as exciting as adding a new bird to one's life list, and one does not have to travel too far from home to enjoy its pleasures. A few moments spent around your own yard will prove most interesting.

Finding nests can be made easier if you help the birds by supplying nest-building materials. First choose a window where you spend quite a bit of your time; then collect some nesting materials such as dead grass and coarse string. I prefer bag string. Be sure to cut the string in short pieces about six to eight inches in length as the bird may become entangled in the string if it is too long. Hang the string on a fence, bush, or vine outside your window and watch for results. Soon birds will be coming for the nesting materials. When a bird gets a mouthful, watch the direction in which it goes and you will soon find the nest. This affords a grand opportunity to learn more about the birds in your own back yard.

We have had a Baltimore Oriole build its entire nest of Christmas wrapping cord. This was a very colorful nest for several weeks. Chipping Sparrows like string for the lining of their nests while Robins are glad to have it draped anywhere about their nests. Eastern Kingbirds will carry many pieces of string at a time. The English Sparrow and Starling will probably use some of your string, too. Probably you will have other species as well. Help the birds find nesting materials and you will be surprised at all that happens.

Route 1, Garland Lake, Denton



## CHRISTMAS COUNT HIGHLIGHTS

As this issue was going to press we received a letter from Allan D. Cruickshank, Christmas Count editor for AUDUBON FIELD NOTES, announcing that the Ocean City Count, with 142 species, tied with Tallahassee, Florida for seventh place in the nation! In the next breath we must admit that Cape May beat us by a couple of species, as usual.

Mr. Cruickshank, with a small army of participants, including some of the top field men in the country, smashed the all-time record for the United States by identifying 184 species at Cocoa on the east coast of Florida.

MARYLAND BIRDLIFE has not yet received complete copies of all the Maryland Counts, and some of the figures here may be subject to slight revision. Annapolis (including Gibson Island) had the second highest species total in Maryland, with 108 species. Southern Dorchester County took third honors with 106 species, the lowest total since 1951; the drop is directly attributable to the frozen marshes and creeks and lack of boat coverage. St. Michaels, however, hit a new high of 99 species, despite the iced-in estuaries that eliminated all boat coverage. The Wicomico area was abandoned this year in favor of Point Lookout, which had not been censused in recent years; compiler John Terborgh was greatly disappointed with his total of 93 species and feels that with normal weather conditions and 8 or 10 participants instead of 4, Point Lookout could beat any Maryland area except Ocean City. Triadelphia Reservoir had good luck in spite of the cold, and reached 75 species for the first time. Gibson Island, after a slow start in the morning, checked off most of its "missing" species with well-planned afternoon coverage, and ended up by tying its best Christmas list, 67 species. The Denton Count was a little below average. The Catoctin Mountain area also was below normal in number of species (53), but had more individuals than in any of the six prior years. A new area at Seneca was tried by the Takoma Park Nature Society; although it shows great promise, the results this first year were disappointing owing to insufficient personnel. McCool, in the mountains of western Allegany County, tied its high tally of 30 species.

Some exceptionally high counts, from areas which have been covered for several years, were: Holboell's Grebe, 8 at Ocean City; Canada Goose, 19,346 at St. Michaels; Black Duck, 10,125 in Southern Dorchester County; Old-squaw, 2,413 at Ocean City; Turkey Vulture, 1,334 at Ocean City; Red-backed Sandpiper, 1,102 at Ocean City; Mourning Dove, 1,624 at Ocean City, 319 at St. Michaels, 317 at Triadelphia Reservoir, and 218 in Southern Dorchester County; Horned Owl, 27 at Ocean City; Blue Jay, 324 at Triadelphia; Brown-headed Nuthatch, 130 at St. Michaels; Eastern Bluebird, 262 at Triadelphia Reservoir and 73 at Catoctin Mountain; Eastern Meadowlark, 4,167 at Ocean City and 51 at Catoctin; Slate-colored Junco, 1,772 at Ocean City, 1,616 at Triadelphia, and 1,494 at St. Michaels; White-crowned Sparrow, 83 at Triadelphia, 42 at Catoctin,

and 10 at McCool; and White-throated Sparrow, 5,154 at Ocean City. Annapolis, in just its second year of coverage, had such astonishing counts as 2,931 Robins, 640 Cardinals, and 2,508 Slate-colored Juncos.

Ocean City had more than its share of the rarities: European Teal, American Eiders, Florida Gallinules, Olive-backed Thrush, Orange-crowned Warblers, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Least Sandpiper and Long-eared Owl were new birds for Southern Dorchester County in its 9th year. Prizes at St. Michaels were Red Crossbill and Tree Sparrow, and the former species was also a good find at Annapolis. Evening Grosbeaks were fairly well distributed, as were also Purple Finches. Siskins were low, but Goldfinches were consistently high. Although Annapolis stole the show with Robins, this species was abnormally high in other areas also. Woodpeckers, especially the Red-belly, were unusually common in several areas, and so were Blue Jays, Winter Wrens, Mockingbirds, and Tree Sparrows. By way of contrast, Field Sparrows were consistently scarce, being joined in this respect by Myrtle Warblers and Eastern Phoebe.---Ed.

#### CAN YOU LEND A HAND?

Robert T. Mitchell

Many Maryland farmers, especially corn growers, are greatly dismayed about damage to their crops by Red-wings and Purple Grackles. In response to appeals for assistance in dealing with this serious problem in several states, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has for the past three years been engaged in field research primarily in regard to developing scare devices and cultural techniques to reduce crop damage.

To deal intelligently with this problem additional information is desired about these birds. It is important to determine the degree to which locally bred birds or migrants contribute to damage, and to learn where the birds that damage corn in specific areas winter. Several readers, aware of our interest in this problem, have submitted helpful information about locations of winter roosts, and other have increased their blackbird banding to obtain more information on the movements of these birds. All these contributing efforts are greatly appreciated.

This year, greater emphasis is being placed upon studies on the relationship of breeding and wintering grounds to damage areas. These studies demand a well-planned and executed banding program, that will require considerable cooperative effort. In Maryland, banding activities will be centered around productive Red-wing and Purple Grackle breeding grounds on Kent Island. After banding nestlings and adults at breeding time, traps will be operated at strategic locations for about 45 miles in various directions. Recoveries from this complement of traps should show the dispersal of birds from breeding grounds. The services of volunteer banders to participate in this endeavor would be much appreciated. Non-banders can assist in the program by notifying banders of nest locations.

Patuxent Research Refuge



## HELPFUL GULLS

Nita Nevius.

During a recent freeze, F. Stewart Lewis of Plaindealing Farm near Royal Oak, Talbot County, was awakened quite early one morning by a terrific clamor in the cove that faces his home. He hastily donned a bathrobe and rushed to his window. There he saw three Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) apparently having a pitched battle, one sitting on the ice, the other two in the air. One gull had the sitting bird by the bill; the other gull had it by the wing. Mr. Lewis then realized that the sitting gull was frozen in the ice and, instead of having a battle, the other two gulls were trying to free it.

He watched while the free gulls flew first to one side and then to the other of the ice-bound gull, pulling sometimes at the neck and wings, other times at the bill and pecking the ice in between tugs, all the time keeping up the raucous clamor. Finally, with much effort, they were able to release the trapped bird. It attempted to fly but had a rim of ice like a skirt around its body and, because of the weight, was unable to take to the air. It fell to the ice again. Back came the rescuers with their raucous cries and again they picked and tugged until the hapless gull was finally released.

Mr. Lewis then returned to his bed, nursing his cold feet, but with the satisfaction of having seen an unusual episode in the life of a gull.

Easton

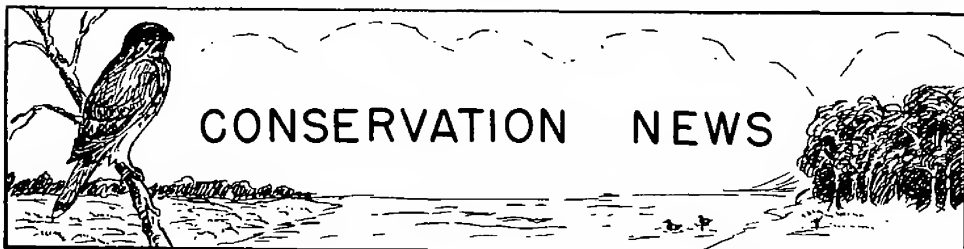
## REMINDERS

The summary of 1955 COUNTY LISTS has been postponed until the June issue. If you failed to submit yours by the original deadline, please do so pronto. We're not giving out any tips as to which counties are in the lead. It's your responsibility to see that your list reaches Mr. Charles Buchanan. Don't let your county down!

The next SEASON report will cover the period, January--March, 1956. Please send your notes promptly to the Editor. They are due the same day as your income tax, so don't wait until the last minute.

The first 1956 nest was found on Mar. 3--a Horned Owl nest with 2 eggs on Kent Island, discovered by Fred Schmid. Remember, we want a report on every nest you find this year, whether or not young are reared successfully. NEST CARDS are available, free of charge, from your local club.

Draw a circle around May 11-13 on your calendar now! These are the dates of the ANNUAL CONVENTION AT OCEAN CITY. You just can't miss this.



### E. JOHN BESSON FOUNDS SANCTUARY FUND

Through the kindness and foresight of Mr. E. John Besson, and in memory of his beloved sister Adele, the Maryland Ornithological Society received on January 13 a gift of \$500.00 to initiate a sanctuary fund. Since Mr. Besson was confined because of illness, the presentation was made on his behalf by W. Bryant Tyrrell. In connection with the presentation at the Baltimore monthly meeting, Mr. Tyrrell showed a color film taken on several different occasions at the Bessons' Chalk Point home, "The Purple Martin," where scores of M. O. S. members have spent many delightful and memorable hours. The annual Chalk Point picnics had become a tradition among young and old members, the novice as well as the professional ornithologist. Each was welcomed as a distinguished and honored guest, be he alone or one of a crowd of four score. As Mr. Tyrrell so appropriately expressed it, "They were always doing far more for others than anybody could possibly do for them."

It is the wish of John Besson that his gift be invested, and increased by the gifts of others and by accumulated interest, until such time as the interest can be used for the maintenance of any bird sanctuary or refuge the Society may acquire. He further suggested that a "Livre D'or" [book of gold] or record book be maintained to record permanently the names of contributors to the endowment fund.

The words of State President Richard L. Kleen in accepting Mr. Besson's generous gift express the gratitude of each and every member:

"On behalf of the Maryland Ornithological Society, I would like to forward to you our grateful thanks for the start you have given our sanctuary fund. I have often dreamed of a series of wildlife sanctuaries throughout our State. I'm sure that many of the M. O. S. members have shared that dream. Your gift provides the foundation that may someday turn our dreams into a reality.

"Often we think of a sanctuary as solely a haven for wildlife; an area where birds and animals can live together in security from their human enemies. However, a sanctuary is also a retreat where men and women, pressed with the worries and anxieties of this troubled world, can withdraw to a closeness with Nature and, thereby, to a closeness with God. The thought of the pleasure and revitalization that you are giving to so many people should make you very proud of what you have done.

"Although we have not yet secured property that we feel would be



Presentation of E. John Besson's Sanctuary Fund gift (Left to right: Richard L. Kleen, Sarah Wood, Elmer G. Worthley, Mrs. J. E. M. Wood, Col. William Triplett, Mrs. Richard D. Cole, Ralph E. Lawrence, W. Bryant Tyrrell, Mrs. Irvine C. Gardner, Richard D. Cole, Orville Crowder)

appropriate to our needs, I will move at the next executive meeting of the State society that our first sanctuary, wherever it may be, be known as the Adele Besson Memorial Sanctuary in memory of one who received pleasure from Nature and who shared that pleasure with all who knew her.

"Our sanctuary fund, though only a few days old, is already growing, and I feel that within a year we will have sufficient capital to maintain our first sanctuary."

---

#### E. JOHN BESSON

It is with the deepest regret that we report the passing of one of our dearest friends. On February 20, 1955, Mr. E. John Besson was freed from the pain of his confining illness. Pleasant memories of John and of his twin sister, Adele, who preceded him last June, will continue to live in the minds of all who had the good fortune to have known them and been inspired by them. And through our Sanctuary Fund John and Adele will bring to countless future members some of the same pleasures they so enjoyed sharing with the present generation.

---

## MEMBERS OF THE MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

February 1956

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 Currier, Mr. E. A., " " " " " "  
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 BELmont 5-7987  
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 Demarest, Mr. J. A., " " " " " "  
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 Derr, Mr. John S., Jr., " " " " " "  
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 Evans, Z. Bond, Aurora, West Virginia  
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 Everstine, Mr. Aden, " " " " " "



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     Reisterstown 242  
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 Fletcher, Mr. A. J., " " " " " " " "  
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     Northfield 5-3943  
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     Ridgeway 7-6647  
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     Easton 1592 J  
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 Gatchell, Mr. Russell L., " " " " " "  
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     Valley 3-1476  
 Geatty, William H., 1624 Bolton St., Balto. 17. MADison 3-1747  
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 Gerry, Mr. J. Lucius, " " " " " " " "  
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     IDLewood 3-2473  
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 Grasty, Mr. Cecil C., " " " " " " " "  
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 Green, Mr. J. Rohe, " " " " " " " "  
 Green, Miss Phyllis, " " " " " " " "  
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Valley 3-8653
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Liberty 2-9866
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- Hackman, Mrs. H. G., Box 455, White Marsh, Md. EDgewater 5-4437
- Hackman, Mr. H. G., " " " " " " " "
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- Henderson, Mrs. Wm. H., Gibson Island, Md.
- Henderson, Judge Wm. H., " " " " " "
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- Henry, Mr. T. Hughlett, Jr., " " " " " "
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- Hewitt, Mr. Marvin, " " " " " "
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- Hobbs, Miss Mary E., Denton, Md. Denton 70
- Hodgdon, Mrs. Kendrick Y., Rt. #6 (Bowling Green), Cumberland, Md.
- Hodgdon, Mr. Kendrick Y., " " " " " "
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- Holland, Milton L., 1328 Northview Rd., Balto. 18. HOpkins 7-7214
- Hollander, Sidney, 2513 Talbot Rd., Balto. 16. LIberty 2-6666

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 Kirtley, Lt. Chase A., " " " " "  
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     Denton 526 W 1

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- Robbins, Stuart B., " " " " " "
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 Shannahan, Jack, St. Michaels, Md. Riverview 5-4791  
 Sharp, Robert, Easton, Md. Easton 587 J  
 Shaw, Dr. Esther, 307 W. College Terrace, Frederick, Md.  
 Shaw, Mrs. S. Edward, 78 Hanover Rd., Reisterstown, Md.  
 Reisterstown 342  
 Sheets, Miss Pauline, 9 W. 3rd St., Frederick, Md.  
 Shirey, William, 121 Fairview Ave., Frederick, Md. Monument 3-9153  
 Shock, Mrs. N. W., 6505 Maplewood Rd., Balto. 12. Valley 3-8188  
 Shoff, Miss Alice M., 695 Gladstone Ave., Balto. 10.  
 Shreeve, Dr. James E., Jr., 3715 Sequoia Ave., Balto. 15. Forest 7-2936  
 Shroyer, Miss Alma T., Finksburg, Md. Reisterstown 129 J  
 Silbernagel, John F., Jr., 508 Mt. Holly St., Balto. 29.  
 Wilkens 5-3093  
 Simmonds, Miss Gene, "Handful", Joppa, Md.  
 Simmons, Mrs. James R., Gordon St., Bel Air, Md.  
 Simmons, Mr. James R., " " " " " "  
 Simon, Mrs. Andrew, Blue Mount Rd., Monkton, Md. Parkton 3474  
 Simon, Mr. Andrew, " " " " " "  
 Simon, Stephen W., Blue Mount Rd., Monkton, Md. Parkton 3474  
 Siple, Miss Charlotte W., 356 Congress Ave., Havre de Grace, Md.  
 Slater, Miss H. Elizabeth, Broadwater Circle, Churchton, Md.  
 West River 4944

Sloan, Mrs. Alexander, 607 Washington St., Cumberland, Md.  
 Slocum, Miss Jean Marshman, Goucher College, Towson 4. Valley 5-3300  
 Smith, Miss Grace Vernon, Ridgely, Md. Ridgely 3421  
 Smith, Miss Helen, Easton, Md. Easton 605 J 2  
 Smith, Miss Hilda E., 9912 Cherry Tree Lane, Silver Spring, Md.  
 Smith, Mrs. J. Brookes, 1802 Dixon Rd., Balto. 9. MOhawk 4-4083  
 Smith, Mr. J. Brookes, " " " " " " " "  
 Smith, Miss Jean M., 6018 Pinehurst Rd., Balto. 12. IDlewood 5-8643  
 Smith, Mrs. Katherine A., 3476 Dolfield Ave., Balto. 15. LIberty 2-6320  
 Smith, Miss Margaret, Easton, Md. Easton 605 J 2  
 Smith, Mrs. Peter W., 913 Louisiana Ave., Cumberland, Md.  
 Smith, Mr. Peter W., " " " " " " " "  
 Sneeringer, Mrs. W. J., Jr., Riderwood, Md. Valley 3-2141  
 Sneeringer, Mr. W. J., Jr., " " " " " "  
 Snow, Mrs. Chester, 7415 Brookville Rd., Chevy Chase 15, Md.  
 Somers, Mrs. Salome G., R.F.D. #1, Denton, Md. Denton 641 W 3  
 Soulsman, Ronald, St. Michaels, Md. RIview 5-5463  
 Spiess, Albert T., 1213 West Poplar St., York, Pennsylvania.  
 Spoerl, Mrs. Frank, 1894 Bedford St., Cumberland, Md.  
 Spoerl, Mr. Frank, " " " " " " " "  
 Spurry, Joseph, St. Michaels, Md.  
 Standiford, Mrs. C. A., Montrose & Pratt Aves., Balto. 12.  
 Stauffer, Dr. Ralph S., 208 W. Irvin Ave., Hagerstown, Md.  
 Hagerstown 1320  
 Stauffer, Mrs. Ralph S., 208 W. Irvin Ave., Hagerstown, Md.  
 Hagerstown 1320  
 Stauffer, Miss Martha, 208 W. Irvin Ave., Hagerstown, Md.  
 Hagerstown 1320  
 Stemple, Miss Vera M., 505 Regester Ave., Balto. 12. Valley 3-6240  
 Stern, Miss Bessie C., 4013 Maine Ave., Balto. 7. LIberty 2-1526  
 Stevens, Mrs. Byam K., North West Point Farm, Centreville, Md.  
 Stickley, Allen R., Jr., Va. Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit,  
 Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Va.  
 Stimson, Mrs. H. F., 2920 Brandywine St., N.W., Washington, D. C.  
 Stine, Dr. Charles J., Jr., 6305 Belair Rd., Balto. 6. CLifton 4-8088  
 Stoehr, Father Edward, St. Conrad Friary, R.D. 4, Annapolis, Md.  
 Colonial 8-2315  
 Stollenwerck, Mrs. Frank, 621 E. 34th St., Balto. 18. CHesapeake 3-6095  
 Stone, Wm. F., Jr., 2612 N. Charles St., Balto. 18. BElmont 5-0582  
 Strack, Mrs. Herbert P., 529 Sussex Rd., Towson 4. Valley 3-2444  
 Sturdy, Prof. Henry F., 85 Shipwright St., Annapolis, Md.  
 Colonial 3-3852  
 Sutton, Miss Harriet, 4115 Wisconsin Ave., Washington 16, D. C.  
 Swain, Miss Helen, 5912 Park Heights Ave., Balto. 15. ROgers 4-0239  
 Swann, Albert T., Jr., 2021 Sinclair Lane, Balto. 13. PEabody 2-8423  
 Tanger, Mrs. Charles Y., 318 N. President Ave., Lancaster, Pa.  
 Tanner, Mrs. H. G., 510 Military Rd., Frederick, Md. MOnument 2-2539  
 Tanner, Dr. H. G., " " " " " " " "  
 Tappan, Mrs. Gail, Gibson Island, Md. Gibson Island 11  
 Taylor, Mrs. Howard, Easton, Md. Easton 869 J  
 Taylor, Mrs. Myra C., 75 Broadway, Frostburg, Md.  
 Tennant, Mrs. Lily, 4129 Roland Ave., Balto. 11. CHesapeake 3-3672

Theobald, Mrs. O. J., 13 Maryland Ave., Towson 4. Valley 3-6867  
 Thomas, Mrs. Robert O., 1924 Frames Rd., Balto. 22, Md. Atwater 4-0650  
 Thompson, Miss A. May, Denton, Md. Denton 116  
 Thomsen, Mrs. C. N., 419 Elm Ave., Takoma Park 12, Md.  
 Thomsen, Mr. C. N., " " " " " " "  
 Thorpe, James D., 9 Elmdale Ave., Akron 13, Ohio.  
 Toth, Mrs. Joseph C., 30 Upshur Rd., Annapolis, Md. Colonial 3-2611  
 Towse, Miss Jean, Rt. 1, Denton, Md.  
 Trautman, Robert J., 25 Murdock Rd., Balto. 12. Valley 5-7334  
 Travis, Mrs. James R., 3301 St. Paul St., Balto. 18. BELmont 5-4500  
 Travis, Dr. James R., " " " " " " "  
 Triplett, Col. Wm. H., 5209 Edmondson Ave., Balto. 29. Longwood 6-0500  
 tum Suden, Dr. Caroline, 707 Hickory Rd., Bel Air, Md.  
 Tyrrell, Mrs. W. Bryant, 246 Park Ave., Takoma Park 12, Md.  
 Juniper 9-5294  
 Tyrrell, Mr. W. Bryant, 246 Park Ave., Takoma Park 12, Md.  
 Juniper 9-5294  
 Van Meter, Miss Mary, 1316 New Hampshire Ave. N.W., Washington 6, D. C.  
 Vollmer, Mrs. Leo J., 6405 Murray Hill Rd., Balto. 12. Valley 3-4556  
 Voshell, James, St. Michaels, Md.  
 Walker, Mrs. Albert H., 610 Overbrook Rd., Balto. 12. Valley 3-0936  
 Walker, Mr. Albert H., " " " " " " "  
 Wallis, David E., 1360 Pentwood Rd., Balto. 12. Hopkins 7-0536  
 Warner, Newell A., 209 S. Woodwell Rd., Balto. 22. Atwater 4-8227  
 Warnick, Ronald T., J.H.U., Box 2295, Balto. 18.  
 Warren, Miss Edna, 198 S. Cherry Grove, Annapolis, Md. Colonial 3-2484  
 Watchorn, Mrs. Carl W., "Gretchen's Folly", Sykesville, Md.  
 Sykesville 387 J 3  
 Watson, Miss Ina, Beall's Lane, Frostburg, Md.  
 Weber, Miss Ruth A., 4410 Atwick Rd., Balto. 10. BELmont 5-6951  
 Webster, Mrs. Clark G., Patuxent Refuge, Laurel, Md. PA 5-1486  
 Webster, Mr. Clark G., " " " " " " "  
 Wedge, Miss Etta S., 1804 Kenway Rd., Balto. 9. Forest 7-4559  
 Welch, F. W., Jr., Easton, Md. Easton 582  
 Wendt, Miss Lorina, Apt. 404, 2237 Champlain St. N.W., Wash. 9, D. C.  
 Wheaton, Mrs. Sidney L., 314 Ewing St., Bel Air, Md.  
 Wheaton, Mr. Sidney L., " " " " " " "  
 White, Mrs. Hazel, Francis Scott Key Hotel, Frederick, Md.  
 White, Hon. John Campbell, Barnstable Hill, Chester, Md.  
 Whitehouse, Dr. Samuel, 2933 N. Charles St., Balto. 18. TUXedo 9-1821  
 Whitney, H. Bruce, 711 Brookwood Rd., Balto. 29. Longwood 6-1071  
 Whitney, Mrs. H. Chester, 3613 Latham Rd., Balto. 7. Oldfield 3-4641  
 Whittock, John M., 2701 N. Charles St., Balto. 18.  
 Wilcox, Mrs. Eleanor R., 4006 Liberty Heights Ave., Balto. 7.  
 Liberty 2-2188  
 Williams, E. F., 338 Winston Ave., Balto. 12. TUXedo 9-1895  
 Williams, Miss Grace M., 1521 Pentridge Rd., Balto. 12. Hopkins 7-0700  
 Willis, Edwin, Box 6293, Virginia Tech. Station, Blacksburg, Va.  
 Willis, Phil, Box 399, Easton, Md.  
 Willison, Miss Mildred, 813 Greene St., Cumberland, Md.  
 Wills, Mrs. J. Henry, 15 Webster St., Bel Air, Md.  
 Wills, Dr. J. Henry, " " " " " " "

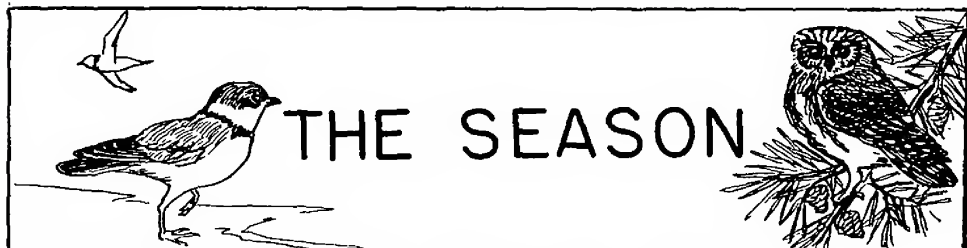
Wilson, Miss Alice Helena, Bel Air, Md.  
 Wilson, Miss Catherine E., P.O. Box 313, Edgewood, Md.  
 Wilson, Mrs. Edward, 119 Archwood Ave., Annapolis, Md. Colonial 3-4509  
 Wilson, Cdr. Edward, " " " " " "  
 Wilson, Capt. Lucille, R.F.D. #2, Aberdeen, Md.  
 Wimp, Mrs. Katherine K., 4129 Roland Ave., Balto. 11. Chesapeake 3-3672  
 Winer, Mrs. Serena, R.F.D. #6, Cumberland, Md.  
 Winsor, Mrs. Charles P., 107 Taplow Rd., Balto. 12. Hopkins 7-3844  
 Witte, Miss Agatha, East Church Hill St., Mount Savage, Md.  
 Wood, Mrs. J. E. M., 1 Old Crossing Lane, Annapolis, Md.  
 Colonial 3-3229  
 Wood, Capt. J. E. M., 1 Old Crossing Lane, Annapolis, Md.  
 Colonial 3-3229  
 Wood, Lester E., B & O Railroad, Law Dept., Balto. 1. Lexington 9-0400  
 Workmeister, Mrs. John F., Park Heights, Cumberland, Md.  
 Parkview 2-7535  
 Workmeister, Mr. John F., Park Heights, Cumberland, Md.  
 Parkview 2-7535  
 Wormelle, Mrs. Curtis, 634 Gorsuch Ave., Balto. 18. Belmont 5-0524  
 Wormelle, Mr. Curtis, " " " " " " "  
 Worthley, Mrs. Elmer G., Owings Mills, Md. Reisterstown 732 J 3  
 Worthley, Mr. Elmer G., " " " " " " "  
 Wortman, Miss Hattie G., 136 Gordon St., Bel Air, Md.  
 Wright, Mrs. Grace H., Box 9, Aberdeen, Md.  
 Wright, Miss Sara, Street, Md.  
 Wright, Miss Sara, 313 Green St., Cumberland, Md.  
 Yeager, Miss Anne S., 212 Ridgewood Rd., Balto. 10. Tuxedo 9-4081  
 Yeager, Miss Barbara B., " " " " " "  
 York, Mrs. Harry C., R.D. #2, Elmira, N. Y.  
 Yost, Mrs. John, Easton, Md. Easton 1876 W  
 Yost, Mr. John, " " " " " "

## WE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Barner, Mrs. G. W., Easton, Md. Easton 1766  
 Booraem, Mrs. Hendrick, St. Michaels, Md. Riverview 5-7651  
 Bowers, Mrs. W. E., Claiborne, Md. Riverview 5-6123  
 Fales, John H., Elkhart Street, Silver Spring, Md.  
 Haddaway, Michael, Bozman, Maryland.  
 Harrison, Ray, Tilghman's Island, Md.  
 Steilkie, Herndon, Bozman, Md.  
 Wanuga, Mr. John, Box 612, Easton, Md.

## M.O.S. SHOULDER PATCHES AVAILABLE

Mr. Irving Hampe has designed an official shoulder patch for the state society. This patch is available to all members and features a Whistling Swan in flight. It may be purchased for one dollar from the state treasurer, A.J. Fletcher, Denton, Maryland



JULY THROUGH DECEMBER 1955

Chandler S. Robbins

The most prominent features of the weather in Maryland during the latter half of 1955 were the August hurricanes, and the persistent and unseasonable cold of November and December. Hurricanes Connie and Diane, although they did not bring tropical birds to our State, did blow a number of tidewater birds inland. The low temperatures of the last two months were instrumental in reducing the numbers of less hardy wintering species, including insectivorous birds such as the Eastern Phoebe, and marsh-inhabiting species such as marsh wrens, rails, herons, and Sharp-tailed Sparrows. Northern finches were present in only small numbers, although there was a nice flurry of Evening Grosbeak reports in the closing days of the year.

Grebes, Ibises. A fine count of 830 Horned Grebes was obtained on Nov. 26 between Port Tobacco and Point Lookout by Paul DuMont and Ed Hall. This nearly matches their record count of 1,000 in the same area on Apr. 13 of this year. Two Glossy Ibises were sighted at Ocean City on Sept. 4 by Richard Kleen and Tom Lord, but they were not seen again despite subsequent searches. The great ornithological attraction during July was the unprecedented influx of Wood Ibises into our State. These birds, apparently all birds of the year, seemed to 'explode' out of their breeding range in the Carolinas, Georgia, and/or Florida in late June. A concentration of 200 stopped briefly in northern North Carolina on June 23; then in the next seven days single birds or small flocks were sighted from Alabama to Ohio and New England. The flock of 15 that settled at Gibson Island on June 24, and which was subsequently shown to dozens of visitors by Mrs. Tappan and Mrs. Henderson, was apparently the largest aggregation seen north of North Carolina. Other Maryland birds were seen as follows: 2 on the tidal Patuxent River near Bristol in southern Anne Arundel County on July 12 (Robert E. Stewart), 1 at Patuxent Refuge in Prince Georges County on July 24 (Stewart), and 2 at Fairbank, Tilghman Island in Talbot County, Aug. 10 (Jimmy Cummings).

Geese. There was a heavy flight of Canada Geese, presaged by several very early arrivals. The first birds, on Sept. 8 in Talbot County (Richard Kleen) established a new early fall date for the State. These were followed by a flock of 8 at Choptank, Caroline County, Sept. 13 (Marvin Hewitt), and a group of 17 flying over Rocky Gorge Reservoir,

Howard County, Sept. 21 (Mrs. George Munro). Blue and Snow Geese were more frequently noted than usual, especially at Blackwater Refuge. A flock of 125 Snow Geese at Neavitt in Talbot County on Dec. 3 (Jan Reese) is the highest tally for this species ever reported in Maryland away from the coast. Richard Jones found a Blue Goose at St. Michaels on Dec. 6, Jerry Brown saw one at Edgewood on Nov. 6, and another individual of this species arrived at Patuxent Refuge on Oct. 26 (Robert Stewart) and settled down for the winter.

Hawks. The autumnal hawk flight was not spectacular, but most of the usual observation points were favored with modest counts. Unfavorable weather conditions on weekends during the height of the Broad-wing flight were responsible for the lack of any figures over 1,000 individuals. The highest count, 855 Broad-wings, was obtained from a comfortable deck chair at the Robbins' home near Laurel on Sept. 25. The great altitude at which the birds were flying (they were visible through binoculars only when a white cloud was behind them) may explain why only low counts were obtained at other locations on that date.

'Hurricane Birds.' Hurricane Connie, which spun around off the Carolina coast for three days and then whipped up through Chesapeake Bay late on August 12, produced interesting birding for the next couple of days. A Wilson's Petrel was found dead on the Calvert County shore by Robert Stewart, a Golden Plover was watched in a Talbot County pasture on the 14th by Kleen, and a Royal Tern was seen on the Potomac below Morgantown on the 13th (Robbins and Don Fankhauser). Also on the 13th, Least Terns appeared at nearly all of the more thoroughly "birded" inland localities: 2 at Goldsboro (Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Fletcher), 1 at Patuxent Refuge (Stewart), 3 at Unity (Seth H. Low), and 16 at Emmitsburg (John W. Richards). These constituted the first records for this species in Caroline, Prince Georges, Montgomery, and Frederick Counties. Seventeen were counted over the Potomac in lower Charles County, where their occurrence was not unexpected (Robbins), but as many as 50 ventured up the river to Washington, D. C. (Edwin G. Davis). Diane, the first billion dollar hurricane on record, approached Maryland through central North Carolina and central Virginia, losing its most damaging winds in this overland trip, and spending its fury in the form of devastating floods in states to the north of us. The only ornithological observations of note were made at Sandy Point during the passage of the storm on Aug. 17 by Lewis Oring. His list includes an early Bonaparte's Gull; six species of terns of which the most interesting are a Gull-billed, a Royal, and 24 Least Terns; and eight species of shorebirds. Hurricane Ione, which threatened our coast but finally passed straight out to sea, had no noticeable effect on water birds. However, observers who were making daily observations of transient land birds at Ocean City in connection with an intensive banding program noted a dramatic decline in the numbers of song birds present along the coast as the storm approached. Forty miles inland, at Denton, Alicia Knotts noted an unusual abundance of transient warblers on Sept. 17 and 18, coinciding with the decrease along the coast. It seems reasonable to suppose that the strong easterly winds preceding the passage of the hurricane tended to steer the migrants inland.



Other Shorebirds, Gulls and Terns. Another Avocet was added to the handful of Maryland records when Richard Kleen and Tom Lord discovered one at West Ocean City on Sept. 4; Irwin Hoover reported that it was still present three days later, but it was not found after the 7th. A survey of nesting gulls and terns on the Sinepuxent Bay islands and Robins Marsh island in Chincoteague Bay on July 18 (Stewart, Robbins and Fankhauser) revealed that Common and Forster's Terns had poor production this year. This is blamed largely upon the flood tides of June which evidently destroyed a large proportion of the early nests. The increase in nesting Laughing Gulls off South Point may also account for some of the decrease in terns nesting on the same islands. These gulls first nested there in 1953. On July 18, 1955, 144 young Laughing Gulls and 76 young Royal Terns were banded at this colony. These are the first Royal Terns known to have been raised in Maryland, and the number banded is believed to represent almost the entire production for this year.

Cuckoos, Nighthawks, Woodpeckers. In marked contrast to last year, when there were many late records of Yellow-billed Cuckoos throughout the State, departures in 1955 were normal. Final dates for various localities ranged from Sept. 7 at Emmitsburg to Oct. 2 at Lake Roland in Baltimore County, with the average about the middle of September. Black-bills left at this same time except for a single bird at Denton on Nov. 2 (Mrs. A. J. Fletcher), a new late date for the State. The peak of the southward Nighthawk flight occurred at Emmitsburg on Aug. 31 and Sept. 1 when Dr. Richards counted 712 and 681 birds, respectively. A Pileated Woodpecker seen on Oct. 20 along Tuckahoe Creek north of Queen Anne is the first record for Queen Annes County (Wilbur Rittenhouse). Red-headed Woodpeckers are increasing again in the Seneca area. An estimate of 50 individuals between Pennyfield and Violet's Lock on Nov. 13 (Hilda Smith and others) ties the previous record set there in 1939 by W. H. Lawrence.

Song Birds (General). Tables 1 and 2 summarize the extreme migration dates that have been submitted for various Maryland counties in 1955. Some counties for which relatively little information is available are included because they supply dates that fit in well for certain species on the list. A dash indicates that there was insufficient coverage at the proper time to obtain a significant arrival or departure date. An "O" signifies that the species was not recorded in spite of coverage during the proper period. These compilations represent the observations of several dozen people. The following members, however, have supplied the majority of reports from their respective counties: Frederick County--Dr. John W. Richards; Montgomery County--Seth H. Low, John H. Fales; Baltimore County--Charles M. Buchanan, Stephen W. Simon; Harford County--Mrs. Walter Braun; Prince Georges County--Chandler S. Robbins, John H. Fales; Queen Annes County--Wilbur Rittenhouse; Caroline County--Mrs. A. J. Fletcher, Marvin W. Hewitt, Alicia Knotts; Talbot County--Richard L. Kleen; Worcester County--Mr. and Mrs. Richard D. Cole, Dr. and Mrs. Richard P. Riesz, Chandler S. Robbins, Stephen W. Simon. Worcester County observations were mostly limited to the period, Sept. 10-18.

Flycatchers, Swallows. Marvin Hewitt broke the State departure record for the Eastern Kingbird at Preston on Oct. 13. This fall migra-

Table 1. Fall arrival dates, 1955

	<u>Fred</u>	<u>Mont</u>	<u>Belt</u>	<u>Harf</u>	<u>Fr.G</u>	<u>Qu.A</u>	<u>Caro</u>	<u>Talb</u>	<u>Worc</u>
Canada Goose	10/3	10/2	9/27	10/3	9/26	10/23	9/13	9/8	--
Yel-bel Sapsucker	10/8	9/28	9/26	--	9/30	--	9/21	--	--
Red-br Nuthatch	12/3	10/2	9/11	9/29	10/27	11/13	0	9/25	--
Brown Creeper	--	--	10/4	10/10	10/9	--	9/27	9/29	9/14
Winter Wren	--	10/2	10/2	9/29	10/7	--	10/20	10/9	--
Hermit Thrush	--	10/9	10/2	10/5	10/8	10/23	--	9/29	--
Olive-back Thrush	9/7	9/11	9/4	--	9/1	--	--	9/4	9/10
Golden-cr Kinglet	--	10/2	10/3	--	10/4	10/23	10/20	10/2	--
Ruby-cr Kinglet	9/9	10/2	9/17	9/16	9/25	--	10/3	10/9	9/14
Cedar Waxwing	--	--	8/9	--	8/21	--	9/8	8/24	9/13
Tennessee Warbler	9/13	9/4	8/20	--	9/4	--	0	0	9/12
Nashville Warbler	9/9	--	9/17	--	9/25	--	0	8/25	9/13
Magnolia Warbler	8/31	8/24	8/20	--	9/3	--	--	--	--
Cape May Warbler	9/17	--	9/4	--	9/26	--	9/27	8/25	9/10
Blk-thr Blue Warb	9/7	--	--	--	8/24	--	9/22	8/24	9/10
Myrtle Warbler	9/27	--	9/24	--	9/25	9/29	9/22	9/4	9/14
Blk-thr Green Warb	9/4	8/24	8/14	--	--	--	--	9/3	--
Blackburnian Warb	9/9	--	8/20	--	--	--	8/20	8/27	--
Chestnut-sided W	9/17	8/24	8/20	--	8/20	--	--	--	--
Bay-breasted Warb	9/14	9/21	--	--	8/24	--	9/27	--	9/10
Black-poll Warbler	9/17	--	9/11	--	9/25	--	9/23	9/8	9/10
Palm Warbler	9/17	--	9/23	--	9/21	--	9/21	9/9	9/10
Connecticut Warbler	9/18	9/18	0	--	9/13	--	9/12	0	9/12
Canada Warbler	9/7	8/24	8/8	--	8/20	--	8/20	8/24	--
American Redstart	8/31	8/24	--	--	8/20	8/12	8/20	--	--
Rose-br Grosbeak	9/9	--	9/12	--	9/8	--	0	9/8	9/13
Evening Grosbeak	0	11/20	11/6	--	11/5	--	12/14	12/20	--
Purple Finch	11/16	--	9/4	10/20	10/9	--	--	0	--
Pine Siskin	12/3	11/6	10/21	--	10/23	--	11/12	12/29	--
Slate-colored Junco	9/25	10/2	9/20	10/2	9/27	10/3	10/10	9/5	9/13
Tree Sparrow	11/7	11/26	11/15	--	11/10	--	--	12/29	--
White-crown Spar	10/22	10/9	10/9	--	--	11/19	10/27	0	--
White-thrtd Spar	9/21	9/27	9/22	9/29	9/24	--	9/22	10/2	9/13

tion period was notable for the relatively large number of Empidonax flycatchers identified. No 'sight' records of these species are accepted here since identification through binoculars can seldom be positive, especially in fall. Nearly all of the birds mentioned here were trapped, measured and banded, and several were also compared directly with specimens or photographed. Plumage characters and call notes (when given) were used in conjunction with measurements to establish identification. A very few birds that were not trapped (only when so indicated) were identified by call notes by an observer who is thoroughly familiar with these calls. Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were trapped from Sept. 2 at Laurel (Robbins) to the extraordinary date of Oct. 26 at Monkton (Stephen Simon); 10 were banded at Ocean City during the period, Sept. 10-18. Alder Flycatchers were identified only at Ocean City (3 banded on Sept. 13 and examined by Mr. and Mrs. Cole, Robbins and Simon), and

Table 2. Fall departure dates, 1955

	<u>Fred</u>	<u>Mont</u>	<u>Balt</u>	<u>Harf</u>	<u>Pr.G</u>	<u>Qu.A</u>	<u>Caro</u>	<u>Talb</u>	<u>Worc</u>
Yellow-bill Cuckoo	9/7	--	10/2	--	--	9/25	10/1	9/14	9/18
Chimney Swift	10/6	10/2	--	10/7	10/15	--	10/7	10/14	--
Eastern Kingbird	9/1	8/28	--	--	8/27	--	10/13	9/14	9/17
Crested Flycatcher	9/15	9/18	9/24	--	9/25	--	9/25	9/14	9/16
Eastern Phoebe	--	11/27	--	11/5	11/13	10/20	10/28	--	--
E. Wood Pewee	9/18	10/8	10/1	--	9/16	9/25	10/5	10/2	9/18
Purple Martin	--	--	--	--	8/30	--	9/4	9/9	9/17
Catbird	12/1	--	10/17	11/1	10/13	--	10/13	10/16	--
Brown Thrasher	11/7	--	--	10/20	9/26	--	10/26	10/16	--
Wood Thrush	9/25	--	10/15	--	10/8	9/23	10/5	10/9	--
Olive-back Thrush	9/18	9/17	10/17	9/29	10/9	9/23	10/11	10/9	--
White-eyed Vireo	--	9/18	10/4	--	--	--	9/10	9/25	9/18
Red-eyed Vireo	9/18	--	10/25	--	--	9/24	10/4	10/3	--
Black & White Warb	9/30	--	10/1	10/5	--	10/1	10/12	10/2	--
Tennessee Warbler	10/19	10/9	10/3	--	--	--	9/27	0	--
Parula Warbler	9/18	9/21	--	--	9/26	--	10/11	10/9	--
Magnolia Warbler	10/8	10/9	9/22	--	10/14	--	10/3	10/9	--
Cape May Warbler	10/13	10/9	--	--	10/15	10/23	10/28	10/16	--
Blk-thr Blue Warb	9/18	10/9	--	--	10/14	9/24	9/27	10/16	--
Blk-thr Green Warb	10/6	10/9	--	9/26	10/10	--	9/22	10/9	--
Blackburnian Warb	9/17	--	--	--	--	9/25	9/27	9/9	9/13
Bay-breasted Warb	10/5	10/2	10/1	--	10/17	--	10/10	10/2	--
Black-poll Warbler	10/14	10/9	10/13	--	10/23	10/1	10/5	10/9	--
Oven-bird	10/6	10/2	10/2	--	10/14	11/25	--	10/9	--
Connecticut Warb	--	9/21	0	--	9/25	10/1	9/25	0	9/17
Yellow-throat	10/14	10/3	10/17	--	10/14	10/1	10/10	10/16	--
Yellow-br Chat	9/7	--	11/3	--	10/14	9/25	--	12/14	9/18
American Redstart	10/13	10/2	9/21	10/5	10/14	10/1	10/18	10/9	--
Bobolink	--	9/18	--	--	9/25	--	9/12	9/9	9/16
Scarlet Tanager	10/2	--	10/23	--	10/9	10/1	10/6	10/2	--
Rose-br Grosbeak	10/1	--	9/20	--	9/30	--	9/26	--	9/15
Indigo Bunting	11/1	10/3	--	--	9/30	--	10/7	9/25	--
Chipping Sparrow	10/29	10/9	10/26	--	11/6	--	10/17	--	--

at Loch Raven (2 recognized by call note on Sept. 24 by Buchanan, who has studied these flycatchers at this breeding locality the past two summers). Acadian Flycatchers were last recorded on Sept. 24 at Loch Raven (by characteristic call note, Buchanan) and on Sept. 16 at Ocean City (banded by Cole). Least Flycatchers were banded from Aug. 24 at Laurel (Robbins) to Oct. 3 at Unity (Seth Low). The third Eastern Shore Olive-sided Flycatcher record (second for Talbot County) was established at Tilghman on Sept. 14 (Kleen). A Cliff Swallow, rare on the Eastern Shore, was found for the first time in Talbot County on July 28 (Kleen).

Jays. The southward movement of Blue Jays, although not so spectacular as last year, was nevertheless a prominent feature in the vicinity of the Fall Line in late September and early October. Daily half-hour counts made at Laurel in the early morning showed 536 birds during

the best 8-day period, Oct. 6-13 (Robbins). During the best 8-day period last year, 2,975 individuals were seen from Sept. 28 to Oct. 5. Sample counts from a single locality, no matter how carefully planned, will not necessarily show the true picture of the migration. Mrs. Katherine Goodpasture, who made counts of from one to two hours' duration from the top of the Pooks Hill Apartments near Rock Creek Park in Montgomery County, found that the peak flight in 1955 came between Sept. 29 and Oct. 7, with the heaviest flight on Oct. 5 (532 birds between 9:15 and 10:45). The Laurel counts, which were completed before 7:15 a.m., gave a blank for this day, as there was a very dense early morning fog! The highest half-hour count at Laurel was obtained on Oct. 9, when 197 jays were counted there (but only 74 in an hour and twenty minutes at Pooks Hill). In 1954 the highest half-hour total at Laurel was 862 birds on Sept. 29.

Chickadees and Nuthatches. Black-capped Chickadees, which were so widespread last winter, were very scarce this year, and were restricted mostly to piedmont and mountain areas. The first one reported was heard singing at Monkton on Nov. 6 (Simon). Red-breasted Nuthatches, likewise, were few in number. Note the wide range of arrival dates in Table 1.

Mimids, Kinglets, Pipits. Late departures for the Emmitsburg area included a Catbird on Dec. 1 (John Richards) and a Brown Thrasher on Nov. 7 (Ruth Richards). In contrast, there were very early arrivals for the Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Emmitsburg on Sept. 9 (John Richards) and at Lake Roland on Sept. 17 (Buchanan). An estimate of 1,500 American Pipits in a freshly-plowed field at Monkton on Nov. 13 by Simon is one of the largest concentrations ever reported in Maryland.

Vireos. A Blue-headed Vireo at Emmitsburg on Nov. 15 (Richards) and a Red-eyed banded at Monkton on Oct. 25 (Simon) were exceptionally late. The elusive and inconspicuous Philadelphia Vireo was seen as follows: 1 at Emmitsburg on Sept. 17 (Richards); 2 at Loch Raven on Sept. 24 (Buchanan); 2 banded on Assateague Island, Sept. 10-13 (Dr. and Mrs. Richard Riesz, Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Cole); and 7 banded at Ocean City, Sept. 10-16 (Coles, Robbins, Simon and others).

Warblers. Examination of Tables 1 and 2, and comparison of this material with tables of prior years, will show the approximate periods of occurrence of the more common species. The spread of dates for each county gives some indication of the relative abundance of each species in various parts of the State—early arrivals and late departures being more readily obtained in localities where a species is common than where it is rare. (Due allowance must also be made for the number of and activity of observers in the various areas.) Among the observations that deserve special mention are new extreme dates for the State. Record arrival dates were obtained at Loch Raven by Charles Buchanan for the Tennessee Warbler on Aug. 20, the Black-throated Green on Aug. 14, and the Black-poll on Sept. 11. New late departures were provided for the Wilson's Warbler on Sept. 30 (at Emmitsburg, John Richards), the American Redstart on Oct. 18 (at Denton, Mrs. A. J. Fletcher), and the Oven-bird on Nov. 25 (well seen near Queen Anne in Queen Annes County, Wilbur Rittenhouse). Among the rarer migrants, there was only one Orange-

crowned Warbler reported during the migration season; this was seen in Montgomery County on Oct. 8 by Philip A. DuMont. Three Mourning Warblers were identified: one banded at Ocean City on Sept. 13 and retrapped the next day (first record for the Eastern Shore, Simon), one seen near Seneca on Sept. 21 (Jack Hailman), and one at Laurel, Sept. 25 (Robbins). Connecticut Warblers were more commonly noted than usual. Nine were trapped along the coast in mid-September, indicating that the lack of previous records there is due to the birds' secretive habits rather than to their absence. Never before have there been so many late records of Yellow-breasted Chats in Maryland. Two birds reported in October 1954 were noted at that time as being the second and third latest on file, except for a few wintering birds. Observations for the current season include one banded at Towson on Nov. 3 (Gladys Cole), one seen at Fulton in Howard County on Nov. 19 (Mrs. George Munro), a dead bird at Glencoe (date of demise uncertain, Stephen Simon), and December or early January birds in Anne Arundel, St. Marys, Talbot and Worcester Counties.

Blackbirds, Tanagers. The highlights in these two families of birds were a repeat appearance of Brewer's Blackbirds (2) at the Richards' home near Emmitsburg, Nov. 8-15 (Ruth and John Richards), and the banding of a mottled male Scarlet Tanager at Monkton on Oct. 23, tying the State departure date (Simon).

Finches. A male Indigo Bunting in changing plumage, seen at Emmitsburg on Nov. 1 by Dr. Richards, considerably extends the known period of occurrence of this species in Maryland. Purple Finches set a peculiar arrival pattern. The first bird at Lake Roland on Sept. 4 (Buchanan) tied the earliest fall migration record for the State; but as shown in Table 1, arrivals elsewhere were widely scattered chronologically, and in a few areas no Purple Finches at all were seen during the usual fall migration period. By Christmas time, however, this species was well distributed and considerably more common than is customary at this season. The more northern members of this family, which lend spice to winter birding in this area, were few in both variety and number. Red Crossbills were noted at Laurel on Nov. 20 (Robbins), Emmitsburg on Dec. 3 (Richards), and Bozman, Talbot County, on Dec. 29 (Vincent Eariokson). Evening Grosbeaks were scarce in November, but appeared in several places during the latter half of December and were recorded on about half of the Christmas Counts.

Sparrows. Slate-colored Juncos twice exceeded the earliest fall arrival date, single birds being noted on Sept. 13 at Assateague Island (Maurice Brown) and on Sept. 5 and Sept. 6 at St. Michaels (Kleen). A closely related western species, for which there are only two acceptable Maryland records for prior years, the Oregon Junco, was trapped and banded at Denton on Oct. 31 (Roberta Fletcher). In last year's report, "The rare sparrow of the season was an adult Lark Sparrow near the North Beach Coast Guard Station on Assateague Island on Sept. 7 (Dr. and Mrs. Richard Riesz)." Returning to the same spot this year, the Riezes succeeded in trapping and banding 2 Lark Sparrows, Sept. 10-13. Five others were counted on the barrier beach at "Ocean Bay City" on Sept. 4 by Richard Kleen and Tom Lord.





# JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

## PLEASANT VALLEY AND THE JUNIOR NATURE CAMP

Gordon Knight

Pleasant Valley is situated several miles from Grantsville, Garrett County, Western Maryland. The large area of land which forms Pleasant Valley is leased by the University of Maryland. The lodge and cabins are nestled on the side of a sloping mountain overlooking a placid lake, which has been formed artificially by blocking a cool mountain stream. The entire camp is a study in scenic beauty.

"Camp week" at Pleasant Valley is proudly sponsored by the Allegany County Bird Club, and is held annually in June. Last year, when I was first privileged to attend this camp, the week-end was open for adult birders. These adults were able to cover thoroughly the camp area, Wolf Swamp and Swallow Falls. Everyone, including those who got their feet wet, tore their raincoats on briars or lost the cars behind theirs, had a delightful time generally enjoying the out-of-doors.

Cars and school buses loaded with the junior campers and a truck loaded with an unbelievable quantity of luggage arrived Monday morning. Thus the 1955 Junior Nature Camp was underway. The young campers were immediately assigned their respective cabins. The rustic cabins are large and comfortably accommodate several people. The nerve center of the camp is the lodge. This building is divided into three rooms: a dining room, a large kitchen and a general purpose room.

Next to birding I enjoyed eating at Pleasant Valley where there is an abundance of very good food.

During the week the youthful campers are continually exposed to the wonders of nature. Since birding in the area is so lush during June, bird study is a principal part of the program. Early bird walks are held every morning possible under the leadership of competent counselors. Last year a fabulous total of 67 species of birds were observed; also 35 active nests were discovered. Among the more interesting nests were the following: Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Golden-winged Warbler, Cedar Waxwing, Magnolia Warbler, and the Chestnut-sided Warbler.

Animal life is abundant in the region. All the campers had opportunities to observe the results of the work of an industrious colony of beavers which have established their homes at the head of the lake.



Some persons were fortunate enough to see these large rodents in action. Another species of animal seen during the week, was a rare Hairy-tailed Mole.

During the evenings and when the weather was inclement informative movies and slides were shown. Representatives from various conservation agencies gave talks concerning many phases of conservation. Various collections were on display in the lodge including: an extensive collection of insects, bird charts, rocks and minerals, plant leaves, and salamanders collected from the lake.

When the 1955 Junior Nature Camp ended everyone departed wiser in the ways of nature and eager to return next year.

I hope I will see you this year!!!

R.F.D. 1, Aberdeen

#### AN OBSERVATION OF COOPERATION

Billy Bowers

One day last January, early in the morning I was sitting in my Dad's car in St. Michaels. Suddenly, I heard a terrific chattering of birds on the roof of a nearby building. I watched the birds, which turned out to be English Sparrows, and saw that one of them was caught in the shingles by his tail feathers. Around him were about a dozen birds that seemed to be trying to help the prisoner get free. At last, after a lot of effort, he freed himself. I don't know how much actual help his friends gave him, but they surely gave him a lot of support and advice.

Claiborne

#### TALBOT JUNIORS VISIT HAWK MOUNTAIN

Jimmy Cummings

Some of the junior members of the Talbot County Bird Club took a trip to Hawk Mountain, Pa., on the weekend of October 19-22 and camped out in one of the sanctuary's Adirondack cabins. Some of the birds we saw were: Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Evening Grosbeak, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, and Raven. During the night we heard a Horned Owl and the drumming of a Ruffed Grouse. Later a trip was taken to Lake Ontelaunee where quite a few water birds were seen including Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Black Duck, Bufflehead, Mallard, Coot and Canada Goose. On the way home we stopped at Bombay Hook Refuge at Smyrna, Delaware and saw thousands of Canada Geese along with Shovellers and Gadwalls. The trip was very successful and we all added new birds to our life lists.

Tilghman

## A DEAD RED-TAIL HAWK AT ST. MICHAELS HIGH SCHOOL

by Billy Bowers, Meade Lloyd, Jack Shannahan,  
Herndon Steilkie, Jimmy Voshell, Med Marshall,  
and Ronnie Soulsman (members of the M.C.S. of  
the 7b Class of St. Michaels High School)

On February 27, as our class was getting ready for the morning homeroom period, Bumper Hause, one of the ninth graders, brought in a dead bird to our teacher, Mr. Kleen. When it was held up for identification, we noticed that it was a large hawk with a reddish tail. Most of the class had no trouble calling it a Red-tailed Hawk. This hawk takes over a year to get the reddish coloring to its tail, so we knew that it had been hatched during or before the summer of 1954. All of us had seen these birds circling over Talbot County and some of us had seen hundreds of them flying over Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania. Dr. Maurice Broun, the curator at Hawk Mountain once told us that Red-tails are not anywhere near as common as they once were. Bumper said that he had found the bird dead in the woods. We aren't sure whether he found it or shot it himself, but we do know that the Red-tail eats mainly mice and rats, and that all hawks, whether or not they eat rodents, should be protected. We talked through most of the homeroom period about protecting hawks. In fact Mr. Kleen even forgot to take the attendance; Mr. Fulton, our principal, had to send up for it. When Mr. Kleen talks about birds, he forgets everything. We sometimes trick him that way into forgetting about tests and homework. Anyway, we decided to let the whole school in on the fact that hawks should not be shot. We took the dead hawk down to the bulletin board in the main hall and hung the bird up with its wings outspread. Then we put up a sign that said, This valuable Red-tailed Hawk ate its weight in mice and rats every two days. Some thoughtless person shot it. That person is the enemy of the farmer, the sportsman, and all civilized people.

We hung around to see what affect the display would have. That bulletin board was never so popular. Everybody stopped. Even the teachers. An awful lot of kids were sent to the office for late notes that day. But we think the display was a great success. We think a lot of people got some new ideas. The fellow who shot the hawk sure made a mistake. But maybe this incident has saved some of this hawk's relatives. We hope so.

## 'EASTERNERS' INVITED TO ALLEGANY JUNIOR CAMP

The Junior Camp, sponsored annually by the Allegany Bird Club, will be conducted this year between Monday, June 11 (3 p.m.) and Saturday, June 16 (10 a.m.) at Pleasant Valley, near Bittering in Garrett County. Juniors from other parts of Maryland are invited. Mrs. Gilbert Miller will bring Camp Registration Blanks to the Ocean City Convention. The fee is \$10. There is also an opportunity for a limited number of adults to attend free of charge, while assisting part time with the program.

## COMING EVENTS

- Apr. 8 ST. MICHAELS Migrant Hike, St. Michaels High School, 7 a.m.  
8 ALLEGANY Field Trip, Koon Dam, meet at Nave's Crossroads, 2 p.m.  
8 BALTIMORE CLUB Migrant Hike, Conowingo, Rock Run, meet at Overlea Loop, 7:30 a.m.  
9 BALTIMORE CLUB Seminar, Bird Songs, Chandler Robbins.  
9 HARFORD CLUB Monthly Meeting, Havre de Grace  
11 FREDERICK CLUB Monthly Meeting  
13 TALBOT CLUB Monthly Meeting, Wildflower Program, Easton Library 8 p.m.  
13 BALTIMORE CLUB Monthly Meeting, Pratt Library, 8 p.m.  
14 TALBOT COUNTY Wildflower Hike, Easton Library, 7 a.m.  
14 HARFORD COUNTY Field Trip, Banding at Lost Valley, 10 a.m.  
14 BALTIMORE CLUB Migrant Hikes, Wyman Park, meet at Charles and 33rd Sts. Lake Roland, meet at Lake and Roland Aves. Loch Raven meet at Cockeysville Underpass. 8 a.m.  
14 FREDERICK CLUB Bird Hike, meet at Baker Band Shell, 7:30 a.m.  
20 ALLEGANY CLUB Annual Dinner and Business Meeting  
21 BALTIMORE CLUB Migrant Hikes, see April 14 for details  
21 ANNE ARUNDEL Hawk Migration Trip, South Mountain  
22 TALBOT COUNTY Migrant Hike, St. Michaels High School, 7 a.m.  
22 BALTIMORE CLUB Hike, C. & O. Canal, meet at Great Falls Parking Area, Maryland Side, 8:30 a.m.  
22 ALLEGANY CLUB Hike, Caudy Castle near Paw Paw, West Virginia, meet at Public Library, Cumberland, 2 p.m.  
23 BALTIMORE CLUB Seminar, Bird Songs, Chandler Robbins, 2103 Bolton Street, 8 p.m.  
26 CAROLINE CLUB MONTHLY Meeting, Camp Mardela, 8 p.m.  
28 ALLEGANY CLUB Field Trip, C. & O. Canal, meet at Millstone Filling Station, 8 p.m.  
28 BALTIMORE CLUB Wildflower Field Trip, meet at railroad overpass, Owings Mills, 2 p.m.  
28 BALTIMORE CLUB Migrant Hikes, see April 14 for details.  
29 TALBOT CLUB Migrant Hike, St. Michaels High School, 7 a.m.  
29 HARFORD CLUB Field Trip, Susquehanna River Hills, meet Hamilton Service Station, 8 a.m.  
29 BALTIMORE CLUB Bird Song Seminar Field Trip, Chandler Robbins  
29 CAROLINE CLUB Bird Walk, meet at Denton Courthouse, 7 a.m.  
May 2 BALTIMORE CLUB Seminar, Mushrooms and other Fungi, Elmer Worthley  
5 TALBOT CLUB Bird Day Hike, St. Michaels High School, 5 a.m.  
5 HARFORD CLUB Bird Day Hike, The Rocks, 8 a.m.  
5 ALLEGANY CLUB Bird Day Hike, Oldtown Bridge C. & O. Canal, 7 a.m.  
5 FREDERICK CLUB Bird Day Hike, 8 a.m.  
5 CAROLINE COUNTY Bird Day Hike, Denton, 8 a.m.  
5 BALTIMORE COUNTY Migrant Hikes. see April 14 for details.

- 5 BALTIMORE CLUB Field Trip, Patapsco, Francis Ave. overpass, Halethorpe, 7:30 a.m.
- 6 FREDERICK COUNTY Hike, repeat trip of May 5.
- 6 BALTIMORE CLUB Picnic, Stony Brook, Edmondson Village Parking Lot, 8 a.m. Bird Song Field Trip same location.
- 7 HARFORD CLUB Monthly Meeting, Bel Air Library, 8 p.m.
- 9 FREDERICK COUNTY Regular Meeting
- 9 BALTIMORE COUNTY Mushroom Seminar, Elmer Worthley.
- 11-13 MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY STATE CONVENTION, Ocean City, Hastings House. begins 2 p.m.
- 16 BALTIMORE CLUB Mushroom Seminar, Elmer Worthley
- 19 FREDERICK COUNTY Hike, Baker Band Shell, 7:30 a.m.
- 20 TALBOT CLUB Migrant Hike, St. Michaels High School, 7 a.m.
- 20 ALLEGANY CLUB Hike, Southern States Feed Store, Cumberland, 2 p.m.
- 20 BALTIMORE CLUB Trip, Fortesque, N.J., register with James Travis, Belmont 5-4500.
- 23 BALTIMORE COUNTY Mushroom Seminar, Elmer Worthley.
- 26 BALTIMORE CLUB Field Trip, meet at Gwynn Oak Junction, 7:30 a.m.
- 27 ALLEGANY CLUB Field Trip, meet at Cumberland Library, 1 p.m.
- 27 BALTIMORE CLUB Field Trip, Mushrooms, Elmer Worthley.
- June 3 HARFORD COUNTY Field Trip, Madonna Fire Tower, 1:30 p.m.
- 3 CAROLINE COUNTY Picnic, Camp Mardela, 4 p.m.
- 8-10 PLEASANT VALLEY WEEKEND, Garrett County, Register with Mrs Richard Douglas, Cumberland, by June 2.
- 10 ANNE ARUNDEL CLUB Picnic, Conrads.
- 11-16 PLEASANT VALLEY JUNIOR CAMP
- 16 HARFORD CLUB Field Trip, Gunpowder Flats, meet at Edgewood Diner 8 a.m.

